

Message Text

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TAGS: SCUL, HU

SUBJ: CU/ARTS: UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN CHOIR

1. JOINING FORCES WITH DEBRECEN'S KODALY CHOIR AND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN CHOIR PERFORMED TWO CONCERTS FOR A COMBINED AUDIENCE OF 2300 IN THE EASTERN HUNGARIAN TOWN OF DEBRECEN AND HAJDUSZOBOSZLO JUNE 12 AND 14 RESPECTIVELY. WITH DR. THOMAS HILBISH CONDUCTING THE TWO CHOIRS SANG STRAVINSKY'S "SYMPHONY OF PSALMS" AND HUNGARIAN COMPOSER KODALY'S "PSALMUS HUNGARIUS." THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE PROGRAM, HOWEVER, WAS THE MICHIGAN GROUP'S SUPERB SOLO PERFORMANCE OF EXCERPTS FROM "PORGY AND BESS." BOTH CONCERTS WERE ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED AS EVIDENCED BY THE AUDIENCES' DEMAND FOR ENCORES WHICH WOULD HAVE GONE ON ALL EVENING HAD NOT DR. HILBISH LIMITED THE NUMBER TO THREE.

2. IN ADDITION TO THE CONCERTS THE MICHIGAN CHOIR WAS GUEST OF HONOR AT TWO FUNCTIONS HOSTED BY THE UNIVERSITY DEBRECEN'S MUSIC DEPARTMENT AND BY THE KODALY GROUP. DR. HILBISH SPOKE WITH HUNGARIAN MUSIC TEACHERS IN TWO THREE-HOUR SESSIONS ON AMERICAN MUSIC AND TEACHING METHODS. HE ALSO MET WITH A PROMISING YOUNG CONDUCTOR OF A BUDAPEST CHAMBER ORCHESTRA TO DISCUSS HER POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN'S PROGRAM FOR CONDUCTORS.

3. IN GENERAL THE CHOIR WAS HIGHLY SATISFIED WITH
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THEIR PROGRAM AND WITH THEIR VERY WARM RECEPTION BY

THEIR COUNTERPARTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DEBRECEN.
SEVERAL MINOR ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS WITH REGARD TO
TRANSPORTATION OCCURRED BUT THESE RESOLVED THEMSELVES
WITH A MINIMUM OF TROUBLE. SOMEWHAT MORE SERIOUS,
HOWEVER, WAS THE INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL RELATIONS'
LAST-MINUTE REDUCTION OF ITS FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION
TO THE PROJECT. TWO DAYS PRIOR TO HIS ARRIVAL IN
BUDAPEST, THE ICR CABLED DR. HILBISH THAT FOR
"BUDGETARY REASONS" IT WAS FORCED TO CUT IN HALF THE
1200 FORINT ALLOTMENT TO COVER EATING EXPENSES IT HAD
AGREED TO PAY PER STUDENT. ACCEPTING THE SITUATION
PHILOSOPHICALLY AND WITH GOOD HUMOR, DR. HILBISH MADE
UP THE DEFICIT FROM THE CHOIR'S OWN CONTINGENCY FUND.

4. THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN CHOIR AND DR. HILBISH
SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCES
AND FOR THEIR PROFESSIONALISM. THEY WERE ABLE
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BEST IN AMERICAN MUSIC AND ITS
UNIVERSITY TRADITION.
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